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President Links 'Star Wars' to Newest Soviet Missiles

By GEORGE SKELTON, *Times Staff Writer*

MADRID—President Reagan will warn European leaders today, the 40th anniversary of V-E Day, of the Soviet Union's new "first-strike" multi-warhead, mobile missiles and argue that the best long-term defense is development of his "Star Wars" program.

Reagan will speak in Strasbourg, France, to the European Parliament—a body of the 10-nation European Community—but all major details of the address were disclosed here Tuesday night by national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane as the President wrapped up a two-day trip to Spain.

It will be the first time that Reagan has talked publicly about the main motivation within his Administration for developing a "Star Wars" missile defense system: the anticipation that during the next decade, the Soviet Union will become superior to the United States in nuclear weaponry.

Reagan's address, which he considers the major speech of his 10-day European trip, represents a personal triumph for McFarlane in a White House power struggle with the conservative communications director, Patrick J. Buchanan. Although Buchanan heads the White House speech-writing team, McFarlane personally wrote today's speech in close consultation with Reagan, erasing Buchanan's harsher rhetoric and adding some proposals for the Soviet Union.

In dribbling out key parts of the speech Monday and virtually inundating reporters with the details on Tuesday, the goal of the President's strategists was to obtain all the advance publicity and coverage they possibly could.

"We are treating this like one of Reagan's most important speeches of his presidency, which it is," said deputy press secretary Robert Sims, who specializes in foreign policy.

McFarlane, in briefing reporters on the address, treated as its highlight Reagan's rationale for embarking on the proposed \$26-billion research program into developing a space-based missile defense system.

The President, McFarlane said, quoting directly from the speech text, will caution that the Soviets have decided to deploy "nuclear forces clearly designed to strike first and thus to disarm their adversary." These missiles, the President continues, can "avoid detection, monitoring or arms control verification . . . undermining (nuclear) stability."

Reference to SSX-24

McFarlane said the President is referring particularly to the Soviet SSX-24, which carries 10 independently targetable warheads, can be launched from railroad cars and has a 10,000-mile range. The weapon is expected to be deployed next year.

The Soviets also are testing another missile that worries the Administration, particularly because its deployment would violate the Salt II agreement, which, although never ratified by the U.S. Senate, has been adhered to by both sides. Called the SSX-25, the missile is highly mobile and can be moved on highways and launched from garages with sliding roofs. It carries one warhead and has a 10,500-mile range.

Reagan will tell the European leaders that "in the short run, we have no alternative but to compete with the Soviet Union" in the nuclear arms buildup if no weapons reduction treaty can be negotiated.

Less Stable Balance

"But is this really an acceptable alternative?" the President continues. "Even if this course could be sustained by the West, it would produce a less stable strategic balance than the one we have today. Must we accept an endless

process of nuclear arms competition? I don't think so. We need a better guarantee of peace than that."

And the better guarantee, he will maintain, is his "Star Wars" program, formally called the Strategic Defense Initiative. The President will promise to the leery Europeans that he will closely consult with U.S. allies during the research phase and also before any deployment. He will also pledge to negotiate any deployment with the Soviet Union.

McFarlane in the past has spoken privately, but never publicly, about the threat of new Soviet missiles that are so highly mobile they will be virtually impossible to track with U.S. spy satellites. He told reporters Tuesday that these missiles mark "a new dimension of the strategic equation which is particularly difficult to deal with."

"One can imagine the time in which the President would be faced during a crisis with not knowing how many, or the location of, Soviet strategic nuclear (missiles)," he said. "This is an intolerable condition, a condition which presents the Soviet Union with an apparent first-strike capability (and) makes us vulnerable to coercion and nuclear blackmail."

More Military Risks

Reagan will assert that since the Soviets overcame U.S. nuclear superiority and reached approximate parity in the mid-1970s, it has been willing to take more risks militarily, either directly or indirectly—in Angola, Indochina, Nicaragua and, most notably, in Afghanistan. The President then will raise the question of whether the United States should attempt to regain its nuclear superiority.

"That is not my view," he says. "We cannot and should not seek to build our peace and freedom perpetually upon the basis of expanding nuclear arsenals."

White House officials told reporters Monday that Reagan, in the speech, will make four "good faith" proposals—in McFarlane's words,

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"testing the commitment on the Soviet side to the reduction of tensions." They basically would involve improved communication between the U.S. and Soviet militaries.

'Definitive Framework'

McFarlane said Reagan's main purpose in the speech is to "present a definitive framework for the conduct of U.S.-Soviet relations in the late 20th Century."

And Reagan will recommit the United States "not only to a partnership with Europe, but to an end to the artificial division of Europe," McFarlane said. But, so as not to set off jitters in Moscow, he will add that "we do not deny any nation's legitimate interest and security."